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(e) whether the Government have taken any action to remove the difficulties of the ryots; and

(f) whether Government propose to change the limit from six to three furlongs at least?

A.—(a) In 1925.

(b) & (c) No improvements to the drain have been carried out recently.

(d) A memorial was received from the ryots of Ipurupalem Vada, Bapatla taluk, in December 1925.

(e) & (f) Orders have recently been issued relaxing the prohibition in the case of lands situated on the left side of the drain and those lands on the right side already held on patta except those cases in which cultivation is detrimental to public interest. Instructions have been issued that in such cases the lands should be acquired and the pattadars granted other lands in exchange. Absolute prohibition is confined to new cultivation and extensions of existing cultivation within six furlongs on the right side of the drain measured from the centre of its defined course.

Substitution of machinery for manual labour in the Mettur Project.

* 111 Q.—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether there is a proposal before the Government to reduce the number of men employed or to be employed under the Mettur scheme, and to substitute machinery;

(b) if so, whether the Government have considered the desirability of employing a large number of hands at a time of great distress and unemployment in this Presidency; and

(c) whether the Government have arrived at any conclusion, and if so, to what effect?

A.—(a), (b) & (c) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer given to question No. 2 put by the hon. Member for South Kanara at the meeting of the 24th January 1927. There will be abundant scope for manual labour notwithstanding the fullest use of machinery.

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR:—“This question, I may say, Sir, has been answered after the last question was answered in January last and I want the hon. the Law Member to give me, with reference to what has appeared in the papers recently that this special officer came to Madras and stayed long evidently for an interview with the hon. the Law Member and others, a definite answer to clause (a) of the question as to whether this machinery will not take away the scope for employment for a very large number of hands. There is no use of saying there is abundant scope for manual labour. I want to be clear whether the proposed Rs. 60 lakhs to be spent upon machinery is to be spent and whether that will mean a necessary reduction of labour and whether all that will be done after taking the Council into confidence. I have specifically asked whether the Government have

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arrived at any conclusion, and, if so, to what effect. No answer is given to that clause. I want a definite answer to my question, if the hon. the Law Member would be pleased to give it."

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“Mr. President, Sir, with reference to the query whether the Council will be taken into confidence before a large outlay is made upon machinery, I may say that we hope to be able to give an account of the type of machinery that is sought to be employed and the cost of that machinery, and to justify the use of that machinery, on an appropriate occasion on the floor of this House. With regard to the other question that emanated from the hon. Member, namely, whether it would be the result from the utilization of machinery that a certain less number of men would be employed than it would otherwise be the case, I may say that the object of this machinery is to reduce manual labour especially of an arduous and dangerous description. I may at once mention that the machinery is only for that purpose, namely, to mix cement or mortar and stone together and to dump the mixture on to the locality where the work is to be carried on in the headworks. The answer that is attempted to give in this question is this: that notwithstanding the use of this machinery the work is of such magnitude that all the available labour in the locality will be utilized.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“I am sorry the answer is still indefinite. I want to know whether the House will be taken into confidence before any money is spent upon machinery.”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“How does that question arise?”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“I have clearly asked whether the Government have arrived at any conclusion.”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“The question of taking the House into confidence does not arise out of the answer given.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“I want to know whether the Government have arrived at any conclusion, or will hereafter arrive at any conclusion in this matter of reducing the number of men to be employed.”

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“The Government have not yet arrived at any conclusion. The report of the Special Officer has not yet been perused by Government and on a perusal of that report and on a consideration of the balance of convenience, the Government will arrive at a conclusion.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“I want to know if the hon. the Law Member can say definitely whether the machinery is not likely to dispense with over 50 per cent of the possible manual labour that would be otherwise engaged.”

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“It is impossible to say that. The idea of this machinery is to replace manual labour. All that I was concerned to point out is that there is abundant scope for employment for every single man in and about the locality.”

Mr. L. K. TULASIRAM :—“Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to inform us whether machinery for excavating earth has been ordered for on account of the Mettur project?”

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The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“ I believe an excavator has been ordered for.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“ May I also ask whether for the purpose of digging foundations or for removing stones machinery has been ordered, i.e., whether the machinery ordered for will not carry stones, etc., from one part of the dam to the other ? ”

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“ No, Sir. Not that I am aware of.”

Appointment of a committee to investigate the Pykara scheme.

* 112 Q.—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether the committee appointed to investigate the Pykara scheme have submitted their report and if so, to what effect ;

(b) whether the Government have any objection to lay the report on the table ;

(c) whether a new committee has been appointed and if so, whether the Government will be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the Government Order appointing the new committee ; and

(d) whether any orders have been placed in connexion with the scheme and what sums have been already spent on the scheme with the chief items of expenditure ?

A.—(a) & (b) Messrs. Merz and McLellan, Consulting Engineers to the Railway Board, have examined and reported on the scheme. The report being confidential cannot be placed on the table of the House.

(c) The Government have appointed a small committee under the Director of Industries to investigate the demand for electric power and the price at which it will be taken.

The committee is composed as follows :—

(1) The Director of Industries, President, *Ex-officio*.

(2) Mr. E. J. B. Greenwood, Electrical Inspector to Government.

(3) M.R.Ry. Rao Bahadur S. K. Sundaracharlu, Deputy Collector.

The Government see no object in placing the Government Order on the table of the House.

(d) No orders have been placed in connexion with the scheme nor has any expenditure been incurred with the exception of that on the investigation of the scheme.

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“ As regards the answer to clauses (a) and (b), may I not ask the hon. the Law Member if he cannot at least give us some idea of the confidential report or give some extracts from that report omitting if he likes the confidential portion, because it may become too late, I am afraid, so far as this Pykara scheme is concerned, for us to scrutinize the matter.”

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“ The hon. Member will see exactly the reason for keeping the report confidential at the present moment. Messrs. Merz and McLellan are Consulting Engineers to the